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*and it will be placed in the hands of our soldiers and sailors at the front. * * **

A. S. Burleson, Postmaster-General.

Mr. Burleson is a Texan and has seen a horse race and has sat in a poker game; he knows a "piker" when he sees one.

London *Punch* (and other British papers and magazines say: "Drop us in the nearest post box and the British Empire will place us in the hands," etc.—no one-cent stamp nor other tool of any kind. The British Empire has five men at the front to our one (both at the front and in training—mostly in training—thanks to several people); it is spending five dollars to our one, and,—Glory be,—it has been in this scrap from the first—even during all the time that we were too proud to fight. If anyone needs—really needs—that one-cent stamp it is the British Empire; but, while it is not too proud to fight, it is too proud to ask that measley little one-cent stamp from its taxpayers and citizens to pay for giving the boys at the front something to read.

It is easy to guess why this great United States asks for that measley little one-cent stamp. It is to conceal the deficit. What causes that deficit? The franking of seed catalogues, speeches and reports from the Comptroller of the Currency. But, if this United States was run with the slightest regard to correct business methods, all these franked things would be charged up to the department, or the Congress that franked them, and the deficit would show up as against the place and the people that cause it.

I think that you all have your own ideas about our Post Office and our Congress—ideas that have a bearing on the zone post rates on periodicals.

Now, the Government may want to continue to be a "piker," but we—the average citizen—do not want to be in that class, even through the proxy of our duly elected governmental representatives.

So—why not give Burleson a "tip?"

And if a "tip" doesn't get the answer—try a "big stick."

I am writing this as a patriotic American citizen, who has licked many of those "one-cent stamps," and who expects to continue to do so. Bought a few Liberty Bonds, too. Chipped in for the Red Cross and the Y. M. C. A. War Work, too. But it's the idea of being a citizen of a "piker" government that chafes. We can't allow Uncle Sam to sit in a game with John Bull and be a "piker."

And now, in the words of the late lamented Partick Henry (who, by the way, was way back in the line of my mother-in-law's family): "If this be treason, Mr. Speaker, make the most of it."

GEORGE H. VAN STONE.

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO.

POETIC "INSPIRATION"

SIR,—In the December issue of *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW*, Mr. Conrad Aiken writes on "The Mechanism of Poetry" to combat "a widespread notion . . . that poetic inspiration has something mysterious . . . about it, something which escapes human analysis." He condemns the "usual theory of poetic inspiration that it is due to a tempest of emotion in the poet." The conclusion arrived at by Mr.

Aiken is that we are brought "back to the theory of Freud. It is to some deep hunger, whether erotic or not . . . that we must look for the source of power."

Freud's original doctrine, I supposed, was that the source of power was erotic. If we modify this theory so far as to teach that the source of power is either "erotic or not" it seems to me that the theory has become a little flat.

Mr. Aiken suggests that the poetic inspiration is a manifestation of "the hunger of the frustrate for richer experience." But that is precisely the theory which he started out to combat. What is more mysterious, "translunar" and "beyond analysis" than the hunger of the soul? Mr. Aiken complains that "our criticism is still a rather primitive parade of likes and dislikes." But after experimenting three times a day for a good many years, I have become convinced that this primitive parade of likes and dislikes is just exactly what "hunger" is. The difference between "emotion" and "hunger" of the soul is the difference between tweedledum and tweedledee. The "scientific" and "psychological" poetic critics are driven back into the harbor of popular common sense. Poetry is the rhythm of emotion.

TUCKAHOE, N. Y.

FREDERICK A. WRIGHT.

FROM COUNSELOR JOB E. HEDGES

SIR,—Please accept this expression of my appreciation of the remarkable work you are doing anent the war through the columns of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW. I am particularly impressed with the February number. You struck the key-note when stating that what Washington officialdom needed was *vision*. What Congress needs is an active, virile, cohesive minority party, competing with the majority party in constructive support of the Government in this crucial time. Your February article appealed to me particularly, again, in using the word "unselfishness" as the acid test of support. No one in Washington need have the slightest doubt that the intelligent people of the country know on whose brow to plant the laurel of approval for patriotic service.

NEW YORK CITY.

JOB E. HEDGES.

A PRESIDENTIAL SUGGESTION

SIR,—When you are editorially reviewing men as Presidential candidates for the next election, I sincerely hope that you will suggest in THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW the name of General Leonard Wood for that high office. He is a man of international fame.

I believe he merits and would get the highest recognition from our people as a whole; so it would make no difference which great party nominated him—he would win out.

His past efforts toward military preparedness for the United States now give him a warm place in the hearts of the people, which will outlast the "too proud to fight" idea.

ARDMORE, PA.

I. N. KNAPP.

[We do not consider this a suitable time to discuss Presidential possibilities; neither upon general principles do we regard professional soldiers favorably in that connection.—EDITOR.]